







LET'S
GAMBLE.

CHAPTER FORTY: ENCLOSING GIRL



I HAVE
ONE
HUNDRED
HERE.

THIS...

ARE
THESE
ALL
ELECTION
VOTES?

!?



A character with a white mask and long blonde hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark jacket. They are holding a large, oval-shaped sign in front of their chest. The sign has a wood-grain texture and contains the text "TELL ME WHICH HAND THE VOTE IS IN." in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. The character's hands are visible, holding the edges of the sign. The background is a simple, light-colored wall with some faint lines suggesting a room.

TELL
ME
WHICH
HAND
THE
VOTE IS
IN.

GET IT
RIGHT,
AND I'LL
GIVE
YOU ONE
HUN-
DRED
VOTES.

GET IT
WRONG,
AND I'LL
TAKE
ONE
FROM
YOU.

HMM?

—I
HEARD
ABOUT
YOU.

SINCE
THEN,
I'VE BEEN
THINKING...



!

YOU
TURNED
DOWN
KIRARI'S
INVITE.

A
LACK OF
DISCRETION
?

COWARD-
ICE?

WAS
IT
SOME
SENSE
OF
JUS-
TICE?

IF THOSE
WEREN'T THE
REASONS YOU
TURNED DOWN
A SPOT ON THE
COUNCIL...

...THEN
IT
IS
SIMPLE.
SAOTOME,
YOU...



**"I AM
THE
ONLY
ONE..."**

**"...WHO
DESERVES
TO BE
PRESIDENT!"**

YOU
DON'T
WANT
TO BE
BELOW
ANY-
BODY.

...
REFUSE
TO OBEY
ANYONE.



AND
IF
SO...

...THEN YOU COULD
ONLY BE THINKING
ONE THING DURING
THIS ELECTION—



A
LITTLE
SEED
MONEY TO
HELP YOU
WIN THIS
ELECTION.

A
HUNDRED
VOTES
SHOULD
PUT YOU
ON YOUR
WAY.

NOW...

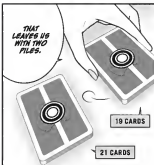
...TAKE MY
HAND...

...MARY
SAOTOME!



YOU'LL RECEIVE A DIFFERENT HAND FOR EACH OF THEM.

FOR FAIRNESS' SAKE, I'LL USE A DIFFERENT DECK FOR ALL THREE ROUNDS.







OKAY,
CHECK
YOUR
CARDS!

HOW
SHOULD
I TACKLE
THIS
BET?

WHICH
LEAVES
ONE
QUESTION
—



HANG
ON...

HMMA?

...A
REALLY
GREAT
HAND,
ISN'T
IT!?

THIS
IS...

THE
LOWER
YOUR
CARDS'
VALUES,
THE
HARDER
IT IS TO
LOSE.

(TOTAL VALUE)

9



9

SAFE



10



11



12

OUT

IF THE
STACK'S
TOTAL
VALUE
CAN'T GO
ABOVE
NINE,
HAVING
TWO
ZEROS
IS HUGE!



MAYBE I
COULD GO
AGGRES-
SIVE
HERE...?

...



I
FORGOT!
THAT'D
LEAVE ME
WITH ZERO
VOTES.

IF I
WANNA
FIGHT
FROM
HERE,
IT'LL BE
ALL FROM
DEBT.

AH...

FIRST,
ALL OF
YOU
NEED
TO ANTE
UP ONE
CHIP!

IN THAT
CASE, ON
TO WA-
GERS.

SEEN
ALL
YOUR
CARDS?





WHY?



**I
BET**

...

**THIRTY
VOTES.**



SHE'LL
BE IN
INSTANT
DEBT!

THIRTY
VOTES...
SHE'S
MORE OR
LESS
BETTING
WITH
NOTHING!



JUST
WHAT WE
NEEDED.

OOH,
I BET
YOU
DO!

IF YOU'RE
GOING INTO
DEBT ANYWAY,
IT'D BE BORING
IF YOU DIDN'T
GO BIG!



...IS A WAGER
THAT COULD
MAKE YOU
LOSE IT
ALL IN ONE
SHOT...!

WHAT
WE
NEED...



I
CALL.

HUH
!?



YOU'RE
KIDDING
ME...

YOU...



IT'S
YOUR
TURN!

WELL,
SUZU-
SAN?

IF I BET
THIRTY AND
LOSE, I'LL
JUST KEEP
DIGGING
MYSELF IN
DEEPER
WITHOUT ANY
CHANCE OF
COMING BACK.



I FOLD!

I ONLY
GET 1 CHIP!



IT'S OBVIOUS,
BUT WHETHER
IT PUTS YOU IN
DEBT OR NOT,
BETTING THAT
MUCH IS RISKY.



AND THEY
BOTH JUST
PLACED TWO
DANGEROUS
BETS IN A
ROW...

...ALL BUT
GUARANTEEING
ONE OF THEM
LOSES.



WHAT
SHOULD
I DO...?

WHAT
ABOUT
ME...?



YOUR
MOVE?



IF I GO
ALONG
WITH THIS,
IT'LL JUST
GET MORE
DANGEROUS.

SHOULD
I FOLD
OR...?



WHAT
CAN
I DO TO
HELP
YUMEKO
OUT?





HMM.

NO
WAY I
COULD
DROP
OUT
WITH
THIS
HAND.

THAT'LL
HELP
YUMEKO
THE
MOST!

IF I
WIN,
IT'S
ALL
GOOD!



I
THINK
I'LL
CALL
TOO.

WELL, I
CERTAINLY
WOULDN'T
WANT TO
BE LEFT
ALONE.



THAT
WILL
MAKE
THINGS
MORE
FUN...

...
WON'T
IT?

...



NOW
FOR
THE
MAIN
EVENT!

WHAT'S
WITH
YUMEKO?
EVERYONE
CALLING
SHOULD BE
MAKING HER
JUMP FOR
JOY.



OKAY!
ALL
PLAYERS
GET 30
VOTES,
SO THE
GAME
WILL
BEGIN!

...
HUM?









THE
"ZERO"
CARDS ARE
THE KEY
TO THIS
GAME, I
GUESS...

THEY'RE
THE
STRONGEST.
AS LONG
AS YOU
PLAY A
ZERO,
YOU NEVER
LOSE.



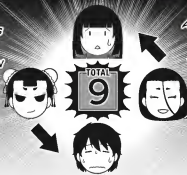
I'M
UP.



THIRTY
VOTES
ARE
RIDING
ON
THIS.

STAY
CALM.
GOTTA
THINK
STRAIGHT.

THAT
ONLY
HAPPENS
IF MIRI-
SAN OR
MIYO-SAN
BRINGS
THE
TOTAL
UP TO
NINE.



IF
ANYTHING,
ME AND
YUMEKO
HAVE TO
AVOID
USING
ZEROS
AT ALL
COSTS.

I NEED TO
CHOOSE
EITHER
THE ONE
OR THE
THREE.

THE
STACK'S
AT FIVE
RIGHT
NOW.



IT
SEEMS
LIKE
IT'S A
MATTER
OF LUCK
EITHER
WAY...

...THE
SAME'S
TRUE
IF SHE
PLAYS A
ONE.

IF I
PLAY
THE
THREE
...

...MIYO-
SAN
COULD
TRAP
US IF
SHE
HAS A
THREE.

IF I
PLAY
THE
ONE...

TOTAL
5

TOTAL
8

TOTAL
9

NO O
= LOSS



TOTAL
5

TOTAL
6

TOTAL
9

NO O
= LOSS



...BUT
IT'S
NOT.

...
ODDS
ARE...



...THIS IS
THE RIGHT
ANSWER.

I
THINK.

I
PLAY
A
ONE.



THAT'S
BECAUSE...

...MYO-
SAN
DIDN'T
DROP
OUT OF A
THIRTY-
VOTE
BET.

I
THINK
I'LL
CALL
TOO.

I CALLED
BECAUSE I
HAD A LOT
OF SMALL
NUMBERS.

I MEAN
THINK
ABOUT
MY OWN
CARDS.
I HAD
A GOOD
HAND...



MIYO-SAN'S
THE SAME.
SHE OUGHTA
HAVE GOOD
CARDS TOO.

SHE'S
MORE
LIKELY TO
HAVE A
ONE THAN
A THREE!



LET'S
GO
WITH
THIS,
THEN.

I
SEE.



...I
THINK.

I
HOPE
...







...

WHO-
EVER
RUNS
OUT OF
ZEROES
FIRST
LOSES!



ZERO.



HWA.

OTHER-
WISE...

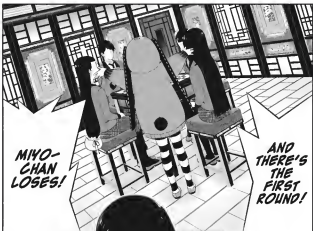
MIYO-
SAN'S
GOT TO
HAVE ONE
TOO.

HOPE
YUMEKO
HAD
TWO OF
THEM...

ZERO.

DAMN...
MIRI-SAN
HAD ONE
TOO, HUN?





**MIYO-
CHAN
LOSES!**

**AND
THERE'S
THE
FIRST
ROUND!**



**SHE PAID
THOSE DEBT-
FREE!?**

**MORE
THAN
THAT... WAIT...**



**THIRTY
VOTES,
THEN.**

**LET'S
SEE YOUR
VOTES, IF
YOU HAVE 'EM!**



**SIGH...
OH,
WELL.**



HER
HAND
WAS THAT
AWFUL...?





I'LL TAKE
THE CARDS,
PLEASE!
DON'T WANT
ANY FUNNY
BUSINESS.



IF WE FOLD
TWICE, WE'LL
END IN THE
BLACK...NOT
THAT YUMERO
WOULD DO
THAT...



HAH?

HAND
-IN
OVER

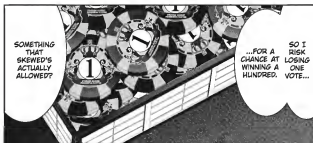
HOW
BOUT
GOME
MANNERS.
HMM??



UH...



NYA
!?





YOU CAN
BET AS
MUCH AS
YOU WANT,
ANY WAY
YOU WANT!



OF
COURSE!

AS LONG AS
BOTH SIDES
AGREE, AND
IT'S A FAIR
GAMBLE...

I OFFER
YOU THIS
BET ON ONE
CONDITION.



SAOTOME...



I'M NOT
GETTING
NOTHING
FROM THIS
THOUGH.





HHUHH?

...

IT IS
JUST
AN ORAL
AGREE-
MENT...

...BUT
I WILL
FULFILL
MY END
EITHER
WAY.

OF
COURSE,
I CAN'T
FORCE
YOU TO
JOIN ME
IF YOU
WIN.



WHAT
DOES...

THAT
HARDLY
MATTERS.

WHAT
DO
YOU
WANT
FROM
ME?

DON'T
JUST
ASSUME
I'LL GO
ALONG.

WAIT...

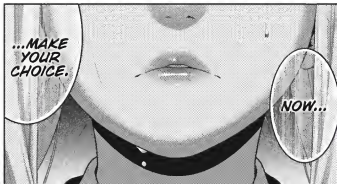
IT
MEANS ME
HAVING TO
FOLLOW YOU
AROUND...
BUT THAT IS
WHAT MY ONE
HUNDRED
VOTES ARE
WORTH.
LET'S DO
IT.





...YOU
WILL
BE
WITHIN
ARM'S
LENGTH
OF THE
PRESI-
DENT'S
CHAIR.

...IS
THAT
IF YOU
JOIN
HANDS
WITH
ME...



...MAKE
YOUR
CHOICE.

NOW...





WHA
—?

Y—

YOU...

IF YOU'RE
GONNA ASK
SOMEONE
A FAVOR...



**TAKE
THAT
MASK
OFF
FIRST!**

A close-up of a blonde girl with a determined and shouting expression. She is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt. A speech bubble is on the left, and a small text box is on the right. The background is slightly blurred, showing some architectural elements.

**...THEN
TAKE IT
OFF.**





**BUT
YOU ARE
TWINS,
AREN'T
YOU?**



YOU
REALLY
ARE A
DEAD
RINGER
FOR THE
PRESIDENT.



TOO
BAD YOUR
TOTAL LACK
OF SELF-
CONFIDENCE
IS THE EXACT
OPPOSITE
OF HER.



**I BET THAT
INFO COULD
EARN ME
SOME CASH,
HMM?**

**TWIN
COUNCIL
PRESIDENTS**
...



I-LOOK,
PROVES
OF THAT!

OH?
WELL, I
WASN'T
BEING
SERIOUS
ABOUT
THAT
ANYWAY.

YOU
HIDING
YOUR
FACE
WAS
JUST
ANNOYING
ME.



2...

DON'T
BOTHER.



SHE
DOESN'T
SEE IT AS
ANY BIG
SECRET.

KIRARI'S
ALREADY
EXPOSED
HER FACE
TO THE
PUBLIC.



IT'S
OBVIOUS.



YOU
HAVE TO
CHOOSE!

MY
RIGHT
HAND...

...OR
MY
LEFT?



DO I
HAVE TO
EXPLAIN?

...WHY?



...BUT NO
ONE CAN
ENTRUST
THEIR FATE
TO SOMEONE
THEY ONLY
KNOW IN
PASSING.

I
DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
YOU
HEARD
OR
FROM
WHOM...

WE'VE
HAD NO
CONTACT
UP TO
NOW.

**I
REFUSE.**



IN
OTHER
WORDS
...THIS
PROPOSAL
OF
YOURS...



...MUST
HAVE
BEEN ON
SOMEONE'S
ORDERS.

IF YOU
CAN'T SAY, I'D
HAVE TO BE
AN IDIOT
TO FIGHT
ALONGSIDE
YOU!

TELL
ME,
WHAT
DO YOU
WANT!?









I WILL
HAVE
TO...

...
FORCE
YOU!



HELLO?
WHAT'S
UP?



HUH?

**You
gotta
help
me!**

Are you
still at Saitomei
school?



WHAT
IS IT? YEAH.

If this
keeps
up...

Get
over
here,
now!



WHAT?
WAIT,
WHAT'D
YOU
SAY?

...yume ko i s d e a d !





That and
"It's what
the vice-
president
wants out
of all this
anyway"...!





NOT
BAD.

NOW
I GET
IT.

"FORCE"
ME,
HUH?



OW...



**YOU
SURE
HAVE
A LOT
OF
GUTS.**

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT CHAPTER!

KAKIGURU

— Compulsive Gambler —

Homura Kawamoto
Toru Naomura

Translation: Kevin Gifford

Lettering: Anthony Quintessenza

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